LETTER

TO

THE EDITOR

OF THE

EDINBURGH REVIEW,

By MAJOR SCOTT WARING.

IN REPLY TO THE

CRITIQUE ON LORD LAUDERDALE's

VIEW

OF THE

AFFAIRS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY;

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SIR,

AS I believe the editor of the Edinburgh Review to be a gentleman as well as a man of talents, I do not hesitate to call upon you to do justice to a very distinguished public character, whose well earned reputation you have attacked in your critique on Lord Lauderdale's pamphlet.

You say, " that the annals of Mr. Hastings's administration exhibit an almost uninterrupted series of *unjustifiable and ruinous wars*; that the orders of the company *were directly infringed*; that the rulers of adjacent states were alarmed, *by the systematic aggression of the English*; that extensive military operations rendered our efforts *only fatal to ourselves*, and that hence it became the duty of the legislature to interfere, *as the directors could not check the irregular conduct of their own servants.*"

This is the repetition of what was uttered in parlia-

ment twenty-eight years ago, when the ministers in power, and the opposition who expected to get into power, were perfectly agreed upon one point; this was, to assume the government of India. Mr. Fox would have given it to ministers nominated by parliament, Mr. Pitt did give it to ministers, nominated by the crown.

But while the struggle continued, it was an object to both parties to lay a very strong case before parliament, and the public. The directors from their education, their habits, and their connections, were represented as a body of men utterly disqualified to controul the concerns of a great empire. Their principal servant, Mr. Hastings, was stated to be a man of boundless ambition; a man who by the unjustifiable wars he had involved the company in, had brought great calamities on India, and enormous expences on the nation. All this he had done from the silly vanity of acquiring for himself the fame of an Alexander, or an Aurungzebe. The period was an eventful one, when the attack was made upon Mr. Hastings. Great Britain was on the point of closing a war, in which America, many West India islands, and Minorca had been lost, and a debt of one hundred and thirty millions contracted. British India was on the point of closing a war, during which we had captured all the French and Dutch settlements, and had successfully resisted the combined efforts of the Marattas, Hyder Ally Cawn,

and the French, for the destruction of our oriental empire. Prima facie, therefore, the directors and Mr. Hastings appear to have displayed infinitely more energy and ability, than the government of Great Britain.

The inference naturally resulting from your representation is, that Mr. Hastings was the author of *unjustifiable and ruinous wars*; that the military operations planned *by him, were only fatal to ourselves*; that he alarmed the rulers of adjacent states by his aggressions; that the directors could not controul his *actions*, and consequently that it became the duty of the legislature to interfere.

I do not wish you to rely upon my word, when I assure you that no one part of your representation is correct. The public records of the company contain a full account of the political transactions of the long administration of Mr. Hastings. But they contain more; the motives by which he was induced to adopt each political measure, are fully detailed. These records down to the year 1782, are printed in the fifth and sixth reports of the House of Commons, better known by the name of Mr. Dundas's committee.

By consulting those records you will find that all the military operations, planned *by him*, so far from having been fatal to ourselves, were eminently successful. You will find that *the only war* in India during his administration, of which he was the author, was

the Rohilla war. You will find that in six months that war was concluded. It commenced in April, 1774, and was closed in October. You will find that so far from having cost the company a single rupee, the whole expence of our troops acting as auxiliaries in the war, was paid by Sujah Dowlah, by which Bengal saved the pay of one third of our whole army, and at the close of the war, the sum of 400,000l. was paid into the company's treasury by Sujah Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude. The gain by the war, therefore, was at least 700,000l. But I am very ready to admit, that if this was a war of aggression on our part, or if it was an impolitic measure, the temporary advantage obtained by it, could not possibly be brought forward, in justification of the conduct of Mr. Hastings. This war was strongly condemned in a resolution moved by Lord Melville in 1782. It was termed iniquitous, and unjust. It was extremely natural, therefore, for Mr. Burke, in the year 1786, to make the Rohilla war the leading article of the impeachment. It was debated two days successively. Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke described it as an act which had brought infamy and disgrace on the national character, and they declared that the war was as impolitic, as it was unjust. No one act of Mr. Hastings's administration called so strongly upon the house, for the most exemplary punishment, as the Rohilla war.

The justice and the policy of the war were defended

by Mr. Pitt, the late Lord Mulgrave, and Lord Grenville. The latter in a speech of great length, and ability, put the subject in every point of view. He was at the time, an India minister. He insisted that if a treaty is concluded between two states, and the third state is invited by the two parties to guarantee the treaty, the party who sustains an injury by a breach of the treaty has a right to call upon the guarantee, and that if war is the consequence of a breach of faith, the state that guaranteed the treaty has a right to assist the injured party. This was precisely the case before the house. Every thing else that had been urged was matter extraneous to the subject. In the year 1773, the Marattas crossed the Ganges and invaded the province of Rohilcund. The Rohilla chiefs applied to Sujah Dowlah for military assistance. That prince consented on certain conditions to assist them, but doubting his own strength, he applied to Mr. Hastings for a brigade of British troops. Mr. Hastings agreed to assist him, provided Sujah Dowlah would pay the full expence of the troops until they re-entered our own provinces. The terms being settled, the troops advanced, and drove thirty thousand Marattas across the Ganges, almost immediately after they had entered Rohilcund. The troops remained on the banks of the Ganges, until the rise of that river secured the country from invasion for the season. When the service was completed, Sujah Dowlah, who had faithfully

performed his agreement with the English, and with the Rohilla chiefs, called upon the latter to fulfil their engagements with him. They not only peremptorily refused, but had entered into a secret engagement with the Marattas, with whom they were to join in the ensuing season, for an attack upon Oude. Such was the origin of the Rohilla war; Lord Grenville contended that just grounds were thus laid for that war in which Sujah Dowlah was the principal, and that as guarantee to the treaty, Mr. Hastings was fully justified in employing the company's troops, as auxiliaries in the war.

With respect to the policy of the war, no man living could have a doubt of it, who would look at the map of India, unless he could prove that it was politically necessary to restrain Sujah Dowlah, and to make use if the Rohillas, as a balance, against the power of that prince. The dominions of Sujah Dowlah were conquered by the English, in a war in which he was the aggressor, by having invaded Bengal. He came into the English camp, confiding in our generosity, and Lord Clive, not deeming it politic to extend our dominions beyond the banks of the Carumnissa, restored to Sujah Dowlah his whole dominions, with the exception of Corah and Allahabad, and those provinces he gave to the Mogul. Oude forms a strong barrier to Bengal, and it is of consequence that a cordial alliance should be kept up between the two governments.

The province of Rohilcund is a continuation of the plains of Oude, no natural boundary separates the two countries. The Ganges flows nearly from north to south, through each country, and it is fordable in Rohilcund for four months in the year, consequently Oude is open to invasion, by the Marattas, or the Afghans. It follows, therefore, that the security of Oude, and ultimately of Bengal, depended on the fidelity of the Rohillas. If they were not to be depended upon, and if by a breach of treaty they had afforded a just ground for war, the annexation of Rohilcund to the dominions of Sujah Dowlah, became an object of great political importance. The subject had been treated as if the only object of Mr. Hastings had been to acquire forty lacks of rupees for the East India company, and to save for a time the pay of the British troops employed in the conquest of Rohilcund. But how could such an argument be maintained?—The object was, security to Oude and to Bengal, and the experience of twelve years had proved that the object had been attained. Not a Mahratta nor an Afghan had crossed the Ganges, since the close of the Rohilla war; Lord Grenville said, that if he had succeeded in convincing the house of the justice of the war, he was sure they would agree as to its policy. On a division, the charge was thrown out by a majority of nearly two to one.

The rejection of this charge by a great majority

is certainly not more an ultimate proof of the policy and justice of the Rohilla war, than a resolution voted by the House of Commons in 1782, is a proof that it was iniquitious and unjust, although it is proper to mention, that it was one of forty-four resolutions, all of which were voted as matters of course, not only without debate, but without one word of observation, so great was the confidence of the house, in the superior knowledge of Lord Melville, and the secret committee, of which he was the organ. Any gentleman who at that period, had presumed to say a syllable on the part of Mr. Hastings, or the court of directors, would have spoken in vain.

But in the year 1786, the subject was accurately examined by men of the first talents on each side of the house. I have been thus particular, because after the most diligent enquiry, you will find, that this was the only war in a government of thirteen years, of which Mr. Hastings was really the author. The insurrection of the Zeminder of Benares in 1781, can in no sense be called *a war.*

From the confidential situation which I had the honour to hold under Mr. Hastings, in Bengal, I am competent to affirm with the strictest truth, that in no one political measure which he adopted, was he actuated by the view of extending the company's territories, beyond the banks of the Carumnassa. Of the policy of Lord Clive he fully approved. But he disapproved

of a departure from the spirit of that policy; in the seven years that Mr. Hastings had been absent from Bengal. During that period, one third of the Bengal army had been stationed beyond the company's provinces, and more than a million and an half sterling in specie, had been sent from Bengal for the pay of the troops; the policy of which Mr. Hastings approved, and which he conceived Lord Clive had recommended was this, that the money issued for the pay of an army kept for the defence of Bengal, should be expended in Bengal; that if our troops were necessary for the security of Oude, the sovereign of Oude should be at the entire charge of those troops.

Mr. Hastings arrived in Calcutta, and took possession of the government in the year 1772. His first political measure was, to order all our troops to march within our provinces.

The sum of twenty-six lacks of rupees had been sent out of the provinces annually, for seven years, to pay the Mogul's tribute. This had deprived Bengal of more than a million and a half of its circulating specie; large remittances in silver had been made to Madras, Bombay, and China, in the seven preceding years, so that when Mr. Hastings arrived in 1772, there was an alarming scarcity of circulating specie, and a public debt of a million sterling had been contracted; the Mogul at that period had thrown himself voluntarily into the hands of the Marattas, who had conducted

him to Dehly, where he was in fact their prisoner. To continue the payment of the tribute to the Mogul, would in the opinion of Mr. Hastings, have placed twenty-six lacks of rupees in the hands of the Marattas, to employ in the invasion of Oude. He therefore determined to discontinue the payment.

The provinces of Corah and Allahabad had been given by Lord Clive to the Mogul. When the latter was in the power of the Marattas, they obliged him to issue sunnuds, conveying to them, those provinces. Mr. Hastings, however, thought proper to resume that grant, of which so improper a use had been made, and he secured those provinces for the company. But on considering that to retain them would militate against that policy of which he warmly approved, that two provinces subject to Sujah Dowlah, divided them from our frontier, that they were liable to continual depredations from those Marattas, who bordered upon Corah; that an additional force must be raised if he retained them; that the persons employed in the collection of the revenues would be beyond the controul of the governor and council; that the revenues stated at the gross sum of forty lacks would be expended in retaining possession of them; for all these reasons, he deemed it more politic to restore those provinces to Sujah Dowlah, from whom they had been taken in 1765, in consideration of his paying fifty lacks of rupees to the company.

The stoppage of the Mogul's tribute, and the sale of Corah and Allahabad had been condemned, as two breaches of treaty, in a resolution moved by Lord Melville in 1782. Mr. Burke, in 1786, made these acts another article of the impeachment, but the house was so thoroughly convinced of the justice and policy of both measures, that Mr. Burke did not chuse to put his article to a vote.

When Sujah Dowlah applied to Mr. Hastings for the assistance of a brigade, which at that time was one third of our whole force, the answer was that it should be ordered to march immediately, provided Sujah Dowlah would pay the full expence, as long as it remained beyond our own provinces. To these terms Sujah Dowlah consented, and Bengal was eased of the expence of one third of its army, for no additional forces were raised.

By these different arrangements one million and a half sterling was in three years brought into Bengal from Oude, but without infringing on the rights of Sujah Dowlah, as a sovereign prince. By improvements also in Bengal in three years, the debt existing in Bengal of one million in 1772, was entirely paid off, and in the year 1777, there was a balance of one million and a half in the treasury, independent of a million sterling advanced for the investment.

If there are men who still contend that it was a breach of public faith, to withhold the payment of the

Mogul's tribute, and to dispose of the provinces of Corah and Allahabad, to Sujah Dowlah; if there are men who still contend that the Rohilla war was unjustifiable, they cannot deny that by those measures Bengal was relieved from a state of very great pecuniary distress, and the future safety of Oude was secured.

In the year 1775, Sujah Dowlah died. He was succeeded by his eldest son, a dissipated young prince, whose succession and whose personal safety depended upon our support. It became a question before the supreme council, on what conditions this support should be afforded to him. It was the opinion of Mr. Hastings, that the treaties concluded with Sujah Dowlah, bound the company to support the son on the terms agreed upon with the father. The majority of the supreme council, Sir John Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Sir Philip Francis, were of opinion, that by he constitution of the empire, the son could not succeed to the father's dominions, without a grant from the Mogul, and as a condition of our support, we had a right to demand further advantages for the company; it was proposed, therefore, to demand from him a cession of the provinces of Benares and Ghazipore, and an addition of 60,000l. a year to the subsidy. I he signed the treaty, we engaged to support him on the Musnud, and to endeavour to procure for him the honorary office of vizier; if he refused, our troops

were immediately to march to Bengal; the young nabob signed the treaty. It is remarkable that this was the only addition made to the company's territories, during the administration of Mr. Hastings in Bengal; it was made against his opinion, because he thought the former treaties were binding on the company. He was not insensible of the value of Benares and Ghazipore, two provinces adjoining our own frontier, and requiring no additional force for their protection.

It is a matter of some curiosity to trace our connection with Oude. In 1765, that country belonged to the English by right of conquest, for Sujah Dowlah began the war in 1764, by invading Bengal. By the wise policy of Lord Clive, Oude was restored to Sujah Dowlah. In 1773, Mr. Hastings made no other condition with Sujah Dowlah, than that as long as he required our assistance, he should pay for it; Bengal being no longer able to bear that drain of her circulating specie to which she had been subject for the seven preceding years; if a prince of equal talents with Sujah Dowlah had succeeded to the Musnud, no alteration would have been made in the treaty. But with a mutinous army, rebellious subjects, and discontents in his own family, the young nabob was compelled from time to time to apply for additional assistance from Bengal. The subsidy paid by Sujah Dowlah to us was 300,000l. a year. It was raised to 360,000l. in 1775. It varied

at the different periods of the subsequent administration of Mr. Hastings; it was fixed at 550,000l. by Marquis Cornwallis; it was increased after the death of the late, and the elevation of the present nabob, to 800,000l. by Lord Teignmouth, and by Lord Wellesley the subsidy has been commuted for territory, the gross rental of which is a million and a half sterling a year.

Until the French war broke out, Bengal was in so enviable a state of prosperity, that the man must have been as insane, as Mr. Hastings was unjustly described to be, who was not satisfied by being at the head of a government, possessing revenues, two millions more than the necessary expenditure. But in the year 1775, the tranquillity that prevailed all over India, was disturbed most unexpectedly by the government of Bombay, who commenced hostilities against the Marattas, not only without authority from the governor-general and council of Bengal, but without making any communication of their intention to commence hostilities.

You were very much mistaken indeed, when you asserted that the court of directors had *uniformly* prohibited their servants in India, from waging war, for the purpose of acquiring territory. To the governor and council of Bengal, such orders were very wisely issued; their views were bounded by the acquisition of Bengal, and they applauded the modera-

tion of Lord Clive, who gave up many valuable territories that had been conquered in the war with Sujah Dowlah; but to Bombay their orders were different: a court of directors is a fluctuating body, and it is not more extraordinary that the directors of one year should differ in politics from those of another year, than that the leaders of opposition should entertain different political sentiments from administration. The late Mr. Sulivan, for some years had a lead in the direction; he had been a civil servant at Bombay. His opinion was, that a tract of territory in the vicinity of that island, was absolutely necessary for its security, and very desirable, as it would give the Bombay government the means for supporting their own expences, without being a constant drain upon Bengal, or upon England; the court of directors adopted his sentiment. The Bombay government was therefore directed to seize the first favourable opportunity of acquiring territory, and particularly the islands of Salsette, Caranja, and Bassein: with these instructions unrepealed before them, Ragoba, a Maratta chief, who had been the Peshwa of the Maratta states, fled to Bombay for the protection of his person, his nephew's son, an infant, having been placed by his adversaries on the Musnud of Poona; Ragoba made very tempting offers to the Bombay government, and by accepting them they secured every advantage for the company that the directors had instructed them

to obtain, whenever a favourable opportunity offered for obtaining them. Hostilities commenced immediately, Salsette was taken, and the Bombay forces marched into the Guzzerat provinces. It is necessary to remark, that two months after hostilities had commenced, a letter was received from the court of directors, so far repealing their former orders, as to restrict that government from employing any other means than negociation for obtaining territory. But as soon as they heard of the treaty with Ragoba, and of the capture of Salsette, the directors expressed their unqualified approbation of the Bombay government, and their determination to retain possession of all the territories ceded to the company by Ragoba. After very fairly detailing the preceding facts, in a series of resolutions, one was voted, which fixed the responsibility of the Maratta war on the court of directors in the first instance, and on the Bombay government in the second.

But the governor-general and council of Bengal, differed very widely indeed in opinion from the court of directors; they unanimously condemned the conduct of the Bombay government, and Mr. Hastings prophetically observed that their imprudent engagements with Ragoba, might involve all India in war; a minister was sent from Bengal to Poona, to negociate a peace with the guardians of the Peshwa whose title the Bengal government acknowledged;

peace was signed in 1776, and by one article of the treaty, it was agreed that Ragoba should quit Bombay: As long as he should remain in that island, the Poonah ministers declared that they could not execute their part of the treaty; references were made to Bengal, both from the ministers at Poona, and from Bombay. By this time, the warm approbation bestowed on the treaty with Ragoba, by the court of directors had been received, which encouraged that government to oppose the pacific measures of the governor-general. At a subsequent period, letters were received from the court of directors, expressing their disapprobation of the interference of the governor-general and council, their dissatisfaction at some of the articles of the peace that had been concluded under the instructions of the Bengal government, and particularly with the article respecting Ragoba, for whose personal safety the directors expressed considerable interest.

The court of directors ordered the Bengal government to renew the engagements formed by the governor and council of Bombay with Ragoba, on the slightest pretence that might be afforded by the conduct of the ministers of the infant Peshwa.

Under these orders Mr. Hastings would have been completely justified, had he immediately recommenced hostilities against the Poona government, for the ministers had evinced no friendly disposition towards the company. We are not to be surprized that

they did not; the personal character of Ragoba appeared odious to them; they accused him of being the murderer of his nephew, the father of the infant Peshwa. The support given to Ragoba by the Bombay government, had involved the ministers in very heavy expences, and endangered the safety of their state; they were obliged, as the price of peace in 1776, to sever Salsette from the Maratta dominions, and to cede it to the company.

The object of Mr. Hastings was peace;—he had no opinion of the justice of Ragoba's cause, nor of his influence or talents; it was his earnest wish to prevent a renewal of the war, and with that view, in the month of January 1778, he proposed certain modifications of the treaty of Poona, strictly consonant to the instructions which he had received from the court of directors, and calculated at the same time, to restore harmony between the governments of Poona and Bombay.

In this state of affairs, Mr. Elliot, a young gentleman of acknowledged talents, arrived in Calcutta from England; on his route to Marseilles, he stopped at Paris; he was well known by character, to Lord Stormont, our ambassador at the court of Versailles, and that nobleman communicated to him intelligence of the utmost importance, which during the trial of Mr. Hastings, was detailed by Lord Stormont himself in Westminster Hall. An historian who has no other

object than to deliver a true relation of circumstances should pay particular attention to the evidence of Lord Stormont, since all the subsequent political measures of Mr. Hastings, had their origin in the implicit credit which he gave to the intelligence transmitted to him, by the king's minister at the court of Versailles.

Lord Stormont said, he had received intelligence to which he gave full credit, of a plan recently determined upon by the court of Versailles, for the destruction of the British power in India; that the first step taken would be, to send agents to the courts of the native princes to excite them against the English, and officers (des exerceurs) to be employed in disciplining the troops of the native princes: that when war was declared in Europe, which Lord Stormont told Mr. Elliot, *was inevitable*, a fleet and a considerable land force would be sent immediately to India. This intelligence, Mr. Elliot was especially enjoined not to communicate to any person before he arrived in Bengal, and then he was only to communicate it to Mr. Hastings, the governor-general, and to Sir John Clavering the commander in chief. By way of insuring the accuracy of the information, Mr. Elliot was desired to take it down in the Persian language, in the presence of Lord Stormont. At Alexandria, Mr. Elliot fell in with one of the French agents on his route to India; in a very few days after Mr. Elliot's arrival at Calcutta, intelligence was received from

Bombay, that Mr. St. Lubin, a Frenchman, had met with a very distinguished reception from the ministers at Poona, that he had presented a letter to the Peshwa, from the king of France, that the ministers had opened a communication with Monsieur Belcomb, the governor of Pondicherry, and that they had made a grant of the port of Choul, on the Malabar coast, to the French nation.

After the lapse of a very few days, Mr. Hastings was further informed by the Bombay government, that a direct proposal had been made to them by a part of the administration at Poona, to conduct Ragoba to that city with a military force, and to reinstate him in the office of Peshwa.

Then it was that Mr. Hastings determined to support the cause of Ragoba, in literal conformity to the instructions which he had received from the court of directors, but not with their view of acquiring territory; his sole object was, to counteract the designs of France, and under the firmest conviction, that in a few months a French fleet, with land forces, would appear on the Malabar coast. He therefore authorized the Bombay government to accept the offer made by the friends of Ragoba; he sent them a large supply of money, and he ordered a force of six battalions of Sepoys, to which the nabob of Oude added an excellent body of Candahar horse, to march across the continent of Indostan towards Poona.

But though the Bombay government had rashly commenced hostilities without any authority from the supreme council in 1775, yet in 1778, after they were authorized to act, they did nothing, and by a fresh revolution at Poona, the friends of Ragoba were dismissed and confined, and the party in connection with France became possessed of full power. The cause of Ragoba appeared to be desperate; at the same moment, private intelligence was received from Mr. Baldwin at Cairo, that hostilities had commenced in Europe; Mr. Hastings and the supreme council determined to act upon this intelligence, though the responsibility was great, should it turn out to be false, as it actually did. All the French settlements in Bengal were taken more than one month before any act of hostility had been committed in Europe. Mr. Hastings strenuously urged the Madras government instantly to commence the siege of Pondicherry; he supplied them with money, and he fitted out four armed vessels in the Houghly river, to reinforce the small squadron of Sir Edward Vernon. On the failure of the plan to support Ragoba, he opened a negociation with the Raja of Berar, a powerful Maratta chief, but Mr. Elliot, the minister he appointed to conduct the negociation, unfortunately died on the road to the Rajah's capital; the object of the negociation was not acquisition of territory for the company, but security against the projects of France.

At the close of the year 1778, the Bombay government resumed its activity; they landed Ragoba with a British force on the continent, and advanced towards Poona; but they were compelled to return with disgrace to Bombay, a disgrace resulting from gross mismanagement, for general Goddard with an inferior force, and consisting altogether of native Bengal troops, commanded by British officers, effected his march to Surat, and was successful in every action with the Maratta army.

In the year 1780, Hyder Ally Cawn invaded the Carnatic, Mr. Hastings had used his utmost efforts to conciliate that prince, and the Nizam: with the latter he effectually succeeded, but Hyder was encouraged to enter the Carnatic, by his knowledge of the dispersed situation of our army, and the supineness of the Madras government. All parties admit that by the exertions of Mr. Hastings, and Sir Eyre Coote, the Carnatic was preserved.

Early in the year 1782, the French fleet and army, which Mr. Hastings fully expected in 1778, arrived on the coast of Coromandel. But the French found us in a situation they little expected; the confederacy formed against us was dissolved, hostilities had ceased with the Marattas; Hyder was dying, and our army on the coast, was sufficiently strong to prevent the junction of the French and Mysore forces. The general Maratta peace was signed early in 1783,

peace was proclaimed between France and England, in August 1783, at Madras, and at Cuddalore, and early in 1784, peace was concluded with Tippoo Sultaun.

From the preceding statement, the accuracy of which can be proved by public records, it must be obvious to you, that acquisition of territory for the company, was at no period the object of Mr. Hastings. That it was the object of the directors at one time, to strengthen Bombay by the acquisition of territory in the west of India is certain, and although they so far changed their sentiments as to order the Bombay government to use no other means than negociation for effecting their object, yet no sooner had they heard that the governor and council of Bombay had commenced war by imprudently interfering in the domestic dissensions of the Maratta chiefs, than they expressed full approbation of their conduct, and condemned the steps taken by the governor-general and council for the restoration of peace.

But the only ground on which the political conduct of Mr. Hastings should be condemned, if it merits condemnation at all, you do not notice. It has been said, that Mr. Hastings gave much more credit to the intelligence transmitted to him by Lord Stormont than it deserved. That supposing a plan to have been really formed for attacking us in India, as soon as war commenced in Europe, events might have occurred,

which would have prevented the war altogether; that a declaration of American independence in February 1778, would have prevented the French war: but in the event of war with France, she might have too much upon her hands to attack us immediately, and that really was the case, for Destaing's fleet instead of proceeding with an army to India, which was the plan of France, proceeded to America, on the pressing remonstrances of Dr. Franklin; that instead of opposing the French and Maratta armies on the western side of India, the better way would have been to allow them to march across the continent of Indostan to the Oude, or the Bengal frontier, and then to engage them.

These are objections to the plan adopted by Mr. Hastings for opposing the projects of France, which it would require some time to answer. But they are the only rational objections which ever have been made to his political measures.

To impute his conduct to a wish to augment the company's dominions in India, is to reject the most positive evidence by which his real motives could be explained. You assume *as a fact, that the uniform orders* of the court of directors, condemned war, for the purpose of acquiring territory, when the truth is, that they did exactly the reverse, as their orders applied to the west of India, will prove; and when these orders were acted upon by a very imprudent and un-

justifiable interference of the governor and council of Bombay, in disputes with which they ought to have had no concern, the directors fully approved their conduct.

Yours certainly was the language of Lord Melville in 1782, when the House of Commons resolved on his motion, that Mr. Hastings having brought great calamities on India, and enormous expences on the company, it was the duty of the court of directors to recal him to Great Britain. It fortunately happened, however, that the company knew more of India than the mover of the resolution did in 1782. There were gentlemen among the proprietors, who proved to the satisfaction of the court, that so far was Mr. Hastings from having been the author of the Maratta war, that even Lord Melville himself admitted, what could not be denied, that the court of directors and the Bombay government were the authors of the war. They denied that Mr. Hastings had brought great calamities in India; on the contrary, Bengal under his administration had increased in wealth, and its revenues had been greatly augmented; the enormous expences were caused by the Maratta war, by the invasion of the Carnatic, and by the war with France. He was not the author of either one or the other of those wars, but by his exertions, he had hitherto preserved India, from a powerful combination of enemies: to recal Mr. Hastings at so critical a period, would probably

occasion the loss of India altogether. They denied any right in the House of Commons to instruct the directors in their duty; and in the end, it was resolved, that Mr. Hastings should be solicited to remain in India, until a conclusion of a general peace. In the year 1784, Lord Melville himself had the candour to declare, that by the opposition given at the India House to his resolution, the proprietors had performed an essential service to the country. I state this anecdote to prove that the conduct of no public man ought to be condemned merely by a resolution voted by the House of Commons.

The words "unjustifiable wars," were the catch-words of party, in the years 1782 and 1783.

For the Rohilla war, and for that alone was Mr. Hastings responsible; that war in its consequences has secured Oude and Bengal from invasion for twenty-six years, and it brought seven hundred thousands into the public treasury.

The Maratta war, if it was unjustifiable, was the war of the court of directors, and of the Bombay government.

The invasion of the Carnatic was the unjustifiable commencement of a war against the English, by Hyder Ally Cawn, for which his posterity have been severely punished.

The French war was the unjustifiable act of the court of Versailles, and it has been punished by the

overthrow of the old government of France. The unfortunate monarch, Lewis XVI. imputed his ruin to the impolitic war which he waged with England, in support of the American cause.

Will any gentleman seriously assert, that there is no connection between the politics of India and of Europe, or that in a war between England and France, the effects of the war cannot be felt in India, unless a French force should actually arrive in India? If this be sound political doctrine, not one word can be said in defence of Mr. Hastings, nor can an excuse be offered for Lord Melville, since by much the greater part of the debt which weighs down the company at this moment, has been contracted, by the measures which he has adopted, to secure India against the attack which France may hereafter make upon it.

But the fact is, that from the time we aspired to a higher character than that of humble merchants in India, in every war in Europe, we have had to encounter France in the east.

In the war commencing in 1742, and ending in 1747, Madras was taken by the French, and Pondicherry besieged by the English. After the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the troops of the two nations, acted as auxiliaries, to Mahomed Ally Cawn, and Chunda Saheb, the competitors for the sovereignty of the Carnatic, each nation aiming at the acquisition of political power.

In the war commencing in 1756, and closing on 1763, each nation sent fleets and armies to India. Success in the first instance attended the arms of France, Fort St. David was taken, and Madras besieged. The victory of Vandewash turned the scale in our favour, and the capture of Pondicherry, fixed the superiority of the English, in the Carnatic.

In the war commencing in 1778, and closing in 1783, France sent at different periods of the war, sixteen sail of the line, and a considerable land force to India, she expended more than seven millions sterling on the war in India.

You cannot speak from authority, when you assert that "our extensive military operations rendered our efforts only fatal to ourselves." When parties ran very high, and when Mr. Hastings was unjustly represented as the author of the Maratta war, it was admitted universally that he had displayed infinite ability in the conduct of it; it was the remark of a man of consequence in the political world, in the year 1784, that though Mr. Hastings had imprudently set a house on fire, he had evinced great courage and activity in subduing the flames; that the military operations which he planned, produced the desired success in every instance, is now an historical fact. The march of an army from Bengal, across the continent of Indostan, was effected without loss; that army was uniformly successful against the Ma-

rattas. When the Carnatic was invaded by Hyder Ally Cawn, Mr. Hastings instantly sent a reinforcement of European troops, and a large supply of treasure to Madras by sea, with Sir Eyre Coote he formed a detachment of ten battalions of Sepoys, which marched by the road of Cuttack, to the Carnatic. One of these Bengal battalions charged a veteran regiment of France with success, and at Cuddalore, thirteen native and thirteen French grenadiers encountered each other with the bayonet, and were killed in a night attack on the lines of Cuddalore. The successful irruption of Hyder into the Carnatic, had given confidence to the Marattas, they rejected all reasonable terms of peace, pleading their engagements with Hyder Ally. From that moment Mr. Hastings clearly saw, that unless he could make an impression on Madajee Sindea, who commanded the Maratta army opposed to General Goddard, peace was unattainable. He determined therefore to invade the dominions of Madajee Sindea, and weakened as Bengal was at the time, he formed a detachment, which entered the province of Malwa; this unexpected invasion of his richest province instantly drew Sindea from General Goddard to the defence of his own dominions. The previous capture of the strong, and it had been conceived the impregnable, fortress of Gualier, had alarmed him for the safety of Malwa. In a general action, Sindea was defeated with very considerable loss; his field artillery

ammunition, stores, and camp equipage were taken, and this induced him immediately to conclude a separate peace, and to offer himself as the mediator between us and the Poona government, for the restoration of a general peace with the Maratta states, which afterwards took place.

Had the advice of Mr. Hastings been followed, Hyder would not have ventured to invade the Carnatic; the coast army was so dispersed, that with a force exceeding thirty thousand men, the Carnatic was actually in a defenceless state; Mr. Hastings had no authority to send orders to the Madras government, but he pointed out to that government the dispersed state of the army, and strenuously advised them to be prepared, by assembling a considerable force, properly equipped for service, at some given point, as the intentions of Hyder were known some months before the invasion actually took place. There does not exist in England or in India a man better qualified for planning extensive military operations than Mr. Hastings; little ambitious as he was, of rivalling the fame of an Alexander, or an Aurungzebe; nor is there a man less liable than Mr. Hastings, to give way to despondency, in cases of extreme difficulty. At the time he was thus exerting himself for the preservation of the empire *we possessed*, it was absurdly asserted here, that his object was to extend our possessions, and that therefore it was necessary to recal him from India.

But I really did not expect that in the year 1810, a writer of character would revive misrepresentations which were industriously circulated by a party in 1782; it is my firm belief, that the survivors among those who then assisted in circulating them, are now conscious of their error; Lord Melville who took the lead in commencing the attack made upon Mr. Hastings in 1782, had the candour to acknowledge his mistake in 1784.

You say that the rulers of the adjacent states were alarmed by the systematic aggression of the English. Taking the paragraph altogether, the inference is, that by the systematic aggression of Mr. Hastings the rulers of adjacent states were alarmed. Now the fact is, that the Nizam of the Decan was very much alarmed by the aggression of the Madras government; but when he communicated his alarm to Mr. Hastings, immediate measures were taken to redress the injuries of which he so justly complained, and this made so strong an impression upon the Nizam, that although he had been the principal instrument in forming the confederacy of the native powers against us, and had engaged to bring his whole force into field, he abandoned the confederacy, and did not make one hostile movement during the war.

It was said in the year 1782, that the British name, and the British cause, were detested throughout Indostan. But what proof is there of the truth of that

assertion? The man who believes that assertion to be true, must indeed have a wonderfully high opinion of the talents of Mr. Hastings, who in despite of the universal prejudice prevailing against him, preserved India to Great Britain. But the fact is that the British character was never more respected in India than during the long period of Mr. Hastings's administration. The attachment of our native troops, was never lessened even during a war, in which they suffered severely; Bengal enjoyed uninterrupted tranquillity and prosperity; its resources had been improving annually: in 1772, when Mr. Hastings arrived there, the revenues were three millions, and of that sum, 600,000l. had been sent annually out of the provinces, to pay the Mogul's tribute, and the British forces, for the seven preceding years. In 1783, the revenues were more than five millions, the principal part of the increase arising from two branches of revenue, salt, and opium, created by Mr. Hastings; the war had been supported by the surplus resources of Bengal. No pecuniary assistance was received from England; in those days, to remit bullion from Leadenhall-street to India, would have raised a flame in the nation. No bills were drawn during the war, except in one year of it, and in that year an investment was sent to England which sold for more than the amount of the bills. The debt of Bengal on the restoration of peace in India, did not exceed three millions,

funded and floating, and the whole debt of India was under seven millions. The debt incurred by the nation during the war was one hundred and thirty millions. Yet were we to give implicit credit to parliamentary speeches, it would appear, that calamitous as the war had been to Great Britain, it had been infinitely more calamitous to India.

From the year 1756, to the year 1785, when Mr. Hastings quitted Bengal, India had undoubtedly been the source of wealth to Great Britain; no bullion was sent from England, but gold in ingots to the amount of some millions, was exported from India to Great Britain; diamonds also to a very considerable value, which were ultimately sold on the continent. Large sums were realized in England, the amount of bills drawn by foreign companies and individuals, on Holland, France, Portugal, Denmark and Sweden, in favour of British subjects who had no opportunity of remitting their fortunes through the channel of the East India company.

It appears to me that you have been very much misled by one passage in Lord Lauderdale's pamphlet. That noble lord I am confident did not mean to misrepresent the passage to the injury of Mr. Hastings, of whom I am convinced he has a very high opinion. But the passage in question had been often quoted during the proceedings in parliament, in the years 1782 and 1783, when Lord Lauderdale was a

member of the House of Commons, and a sense was then put upon it as distinct from its real meaning, as light is to darkness; the impression remained upon his lordship's mind, but as a proof that he meant no deception, he refers in a note to the minute of which the passage forms one sentence; the words of Lord Lauderdale and Mr. Hastings are, "Mr. Hastings in *reply* to the instructions *of the court of directors* prohibiting all schemes of conquest, and augmentation of dominion, long ago asked, if the internal resources of a state are not equal to its wants, where can it find *immediate relief*, but from *external means?*"

A man unacquainted with India, after reading this passage, would naturally conceive, that to relieve the wants of Bengal, Mr. Hastings had enlarged the dominion of the company by conquest; that the court of directors had condemned him for having done so, and that *in reply*, he had told them the wants of Bengal being greater than its resources, he had resorted to war, in order to enlarge *their dominions.* But the truth is, that he never had an idea of enlarging the dominions of the company, that he received *no letter from the court of directors*, and of course, that he addressed no letter to them *in reply*, upon such a subject.

The quotation is taken from a controversial minute, written by Mr. Hastings, in answer to a minute of the majority of the supreme council, in which minute

they censured the line of foreign politics which he had adopted, previous to their departure from England. Their minute had a reference to the arrangements formed by Mr. Hastings with Sujah Dowlah, in the year 1773. In that year, Mr. Hastings, who was the governor of Bengal under the company, became governor-general of Bengal under a parliamentary nomination. Sir John Clavering, colonel Monson, and Sir Philip Francis formed a majority of the new council. They came from England impressed with the opinion that Sujah Dowlah might become a formidable enemy to the company; this opinion was prevalent in England when they left it, although Lord Clive never entertained it. On their arrival in Bengal in October 1774, they found that Mr. Hastings had put Sujah Dowlah in possession of the provinces of Corah and Allahabad, and that a third of our army was acting as auxiliaries in the Rohilla war, which at the moment of their arrival was closed, although the account of its termination had not reached Calcutta. They were very much alarmed, and soon began to express their disapprobation of the measures which Mr. Hastings had adopted. Their arguments were, that it was bad policy to add to the power of Sujah Dowlah; that it was a disobedience of the company's orders to engage as a party in the differences of the native princes, and that our army at a distance of one thousand miles from Calcutta, was in a state of con-

siderable danger. In reply to these arguments, Mr. Hastings urged those in defence of the Rohilla war, which were repeated by Lord Grenville in the year 1786; In the course of his argument, Mr. Hastings said in substance, "in the year 1772, I took charge of this government, when its resources were not equal to its wants. I could obtain no *immediate relief*, but from *external means*. A concurrence of unexpected circumstances afforded me *those external means*. The flight of the Mogul to Dehly, at the instigation of the Marattas, justified me in stopping the payment of his tribute, by which I saved 300,000l. a year to the company. His grant of the provinces of Corah and Allahabad to the Marattas justified me in taking those provinces for the company who had conquered them in the year 1765, and in the same year, they had been given to the Mogul by Lord Clive; I thought it impolitic to augment our territories, and therefore I closed with the offer made by Sujah Dowlah, to purchase them for fifty lacks of rupees; to us they would have produced nothing. I formed an arrangement with Sujah Dowlah, by which he took upon himself to pay the expence of one third of our whole army, as long as it remained beyond our own provinces. By this arrangement without at all endangering Bengal, the country was relieved from the expence of one third of our army. These *external* means have brought back to Bengal one million and a half, of the three millions

which had been sent out of Bengal into the upper provinces, in the seven years preceding my administration. I entertain no apprehensions from Sujah Dowlah, he has once felt our power, and will not again venture to offend us. Every accession to the consequence of Sujah Dowlah affords additional security to Bengal. I very well know that a former government expressed a jealousy of Sujah Dowlah, and that the same jealousy was entertained of him in England. My predecessor, Mr. Verelst, was of my opinion, that we might depend on his fidelity; but the majority of his council entertained different sentiments, and the causeless alarm reached England; I have not disobeyed the orders of the company, for in no one act of my government have I attempted to enlarge the dominion of the company; three years ago when I became the head of this government, Bengal was in that state of distress, which no efforts of man could *immediately* have relieved, unless *external means* had been resorted to; chance very unexpectedly offered *those external means*: by the use which I made of them, Bengal is at this moment in a state of the most enviable prosperity; whether those means were right or wrong, the gentlemen who form a majority of the council, and who are in effect the government, feel themselves in a very different situation indeed from that in which I was in the year 1772, when the treasury was empty, a debt of a million sterling

existing, and when the income barely balanced the expenditure. They have a full treasury, the debt must be speedily paid off, and the investment will be provided from our surplus revenues. Independent of the bullion brought into Bengal, in consequence of my engagements with Sujah Dowlah, the expence of our army is one third less than it was in the year 1772, and the stoppage of the Mogul's tribute is a further saving to Bengal, of 300,000l. a year."

It was in the course of the controversy, between the majority of the supreme council and Mr. Hastings that he inserted the words, in a minute of the 10th of January, 1775, that Lord Lauderdale has quoted. Had his lordship read the minute, he would have discovered, that there was no question at all before the supreme council, relative to an augmentation of *our dominion*; it was a question of retrospect, simply. It applied to acts done before the majority of the supreme council had left England, and for which they were not in any degree responsible. But it was perfectly competent to them to arraign the political conduct of Mr. Hastings, if they pleased, and it was incumbent upon him to defend that conduct, because the minutes on each side, were to be sent to the court of directors. In the year 1783, when Mr. Fox's India bill was pending in the House of Commons, he quoted the preceding passage, and gave the same sense to it that Lord Lauderdale has given to it in his pam-

phlet. The impression remaining on Lord Lauderdale's mind undoubtedly was, that the *external means* alluded to by Mr. Hastings, were immediate relief to the wants of Bengal, by an acquisition of territory for the company. The argument urged by Lord Lauderdale with great ability throughout his pamphlet is, that his majesty's India ministers have created the present embarrassments of the company by sanctioning wars carried on in India, for the augmentation of territory for the company. But in support of his argument, he could not have applied the passage which he has quoted from the minute of Mr. Hastings of the 10th of January, 1775, had he trusted less to his memory, and perused the document itself.

After quoting the resolution moved by Lord Melville, in 1782, and the clause prohibiting wars in India for extension of dominion, as repugnant to the wish, the honour, and the policy of this nation, you say, "but noble and enlightened as these principles are, it is *but justice* to add, that they had *uniformly* actuated the policy of the court of directors."

"But while such were *the principles*, and such the *instructions* of the court of directors, *it must be confessed* that *far other views* influenced the councils of *Calcutta* and *Bombay*." In a work of such established reputation as the Edinburgh Review, I did not, I confess, expect to meet with a perversion of *historical facts*, which I may almost say, *is unexampled*.

The truth is, that the council of Bombay, literally obeyed the instructions which they had received *from the court of directors.* The supreme council of *Calcutta* uninformed of the orders that had been sent to Bombay, condemned the court of directors, when they severely censured the Bombay government, for having commenced hostilities against the Marattas. A war caused by our interference in the domestic dissensions of the Maratta chiefs; the general instructions of the directors did most undoubtedly prohibit such interference, but these were superseded by an order applied to a particular object, the acquisition of Salsette, Caranja, and Bassein. "We cannot point out the particular means (say the directors) but we would *rather* they were obtained *by purchase* than *war.*"—The meaning of this order is obvious.

That the court of directors had no other object in view, than the interest of the company in transmitting those instructions to Bombay, which caused the Maratta war, I am thoroughly convinced. But no man, reading those instructions will contend that they had *uniformly* prohibited war for extension of dominion. The French set the example of interfering in the national quarrels of the native powers, and proved to us what could be done by five hundred Europeans, and a train of field artillery. Had Monsieur Dupleix been properly supported, the oriental empire would have belonged to France, not to Great Britain, at the

present day. It is by interfering in the national quarrels of the native powers, that from possessing a few acres round Madras, and Calcutta, we now rule a mighty empire. Lord Pigot supported Mahomed Ally Cawn against Chunda Saheb in the Carnatic; Lord Clive supported Meer Jaffier against Suraju Dowlah, in Bengal.

The court of directors were certainly not bound to act as umpires, or as parties, in the national quarrels of the native princes. But having acquired so much political power in the Carnatic and in Bengal by such interference, it was natural for them to consider whether, by similar means, the great object which they had in view could not be obtained, on the western side of India.

I have the presumption to differ from the court of directors of 1768; I think their instructions to Bombay were impolitic, because that government had neither an army nor resources sufficient to cope with the Marattas, unless the chief whose cause they espoused was very powerful indeed. It was impolitic also, not to transmit to Bengal and Madras, a copy of the instructions sent to Bombay, because in the event of a Maratta war, the co-operation of those governments was indispensably necessary.

When the policy of those instructions was a subject of consideration at the India house, in 1782, Mr. Suli-

van in a very manly way, avowed that he had a principal share in persuading the court to issue those instructions, which he still thought were highly proper. The directors in 1768, had some idea of giving up the island of Bombay, not only on account of the heavy expence of the establishment, but of the insecurity of the place, as long as the Marattas retained Salsette, Caranja, and Bassein. But as Bombay was an excellent harbour, and contained very good docks for building and repairing ships, they determined to retain the island, and if possible to acquire territory on the western side of India. Such, he said, was the history of those instructions, which had been so severely censured in parliament by Mr. Dundas. Nor was it true either, he observed, that on the side of Bengal, the court had desired no accession of territory. On the contrary, they had been most anxious to obtain the province of Cuttack, from the Marattas, because that narrow district divided Bengal, from our possessions on the coast, and in a political, and in a military view, a free communication by land, between Calcutta and Madras, was of infinite importance. When the government of Bengal extended the company's dominions one hundred miles by the acquisition of Benares and Ghazepore, in the year 1775, so far were the court of directors from expressing concern at this extent of dominion, that

they returned their thanks to the Bengal government, for the valuable acquisition they had obtained, for the company. In each instance he contended that the court of directors were right, but nothing he added could be more ridiculous, than the compliments bestowed upon that court, *for its moderation.*

"If indeed (you say) we except the war with Mysore, a state which has uniformly been the aggressor, all the military operations of that period, constituted a direct infringement of the orders of the directors, which it was the duty *of the Bengal government* to respect!"

This cannot be true, unless there is an order extant prohibiting *the Bengal government* from marching a single battalion *during war*, beyond our own provinces. But the directors were too wise to issue such an order at any period, and they have very warmly approved of all the military operations planned and executed by the Bengal government during the war.

Had the war been wantonly provoked by the Bengal government, great indeed would be its responsibility. But it is impossible to impute the Maratta war, the Mysore war, or the French war, to an infringement of those orders which that government was certainly bound to respect.

You tell us that it became the duty of the legislature to interfere, "as the orders of the court of direc-

tors, had been found insufficient to restrain the irregular ambition of their own servants."

On what authority is so strange an assertion made? Not from the authority of the court of directors themselves I am sure; under the old system, they possessed real power, but at present, they cannot restrain, what to them may appear irregular ambition, in their own servants, nor have they been permitted even to censure their own servants.

Perfect fairness and candour is not to be expected during the tumult of debate, or during the heat of party contention in parliament. Mr. Fox affirmed, in the year 1783, that the distress of the company at that period, was ascribable to the disobedience of the orders of the court of directors, that is, to orders relative to war. Every man of common sense knew, that war caused the distress of the company then, as war is at this moment, the cause of the distress of the nation, and of the company. If therefore, it was true, that the Bengal government had wantonly provoked war, and that the directors had not the power to enforce obedience to their pacific orders, nor to restrain the irregular ambition of their own servants, no man could deny the necessity of legislative interference.

But at the distance of twenty-seven years from 1783, when the annals of Mr. Hastings's administration form an important portion of the history of the British em-

pire, it was not to be expected a writer of character would assert, that the directors wanted power to restrain the irregular ambition of their own servants, on no better authority than a speech delivered in the House of Commons, during the heat of party contention.

The Edinburgh Review forms a part of every gentleman's library, I believe, in the united kingdom. In such a work, we have a right to expect that historical facts shall be correctly stated, at least, whatever the reasoning may be upon those facts. Of intentional misrepresentation, I am convinced you are incapable; but you have given too much credit to the assertions confidently made in parliamentary speeches.

That it was the duty of the Bengal government to respect the orders of the court of directors, no man will deny. But in the commencement of the Maratta war, the Mysore war, or the French war, or in planning and executing military operations, while those wars continued, I call upon you to produce one single order that the Bengal government disobeyed. The return must be, non est inventus. Mr. Hastings did most assuredly, in various instances, disobey the positive and standing orders of the company. But they were on matters of very trifling importance indeed, on a comparison with orders relative to war, or to military operations. The reasons which he assigned in justification of his breach of orders, were so satisfactory

that the directors returned him thanks unanimously, for his long, faithful, and able services; the reasons were equally satisfactory in Westminster Hall, at a subsequent period.

Mr. Fox as a powerful speaker in parliament, and Mr. Fox as an historian, were very different characters. When he proposed an important measure to the consideration of the House of Commons, in 1783, he said every thing which he conceived would induce the House to agree with him, little solicitous as to the accuracy of his assertions.

But if Mr. Fox had written the annals of Mr. Hastings's administration, it is impossible he could have advanced what is certainly not true, that the distress of the company in 1783, was ascribable to the disobedience of the orders of the court of directors. The scrupulous attention to accuracy, and the diligence displayed by Mr. Fox in the investigation of the truth of every fact that is stated in his valuable history of a part of the reign of James II. convinces me that he would have felt it his bounden duty, as an historian, to have perused all the orders and instructions transmitted by the court of directors to their governments in India, that had a relation to war, for extension of dominion. When he found the general instructions of the company superseded by a positive instruction of a very different kind, applied to a particular object, namely,

the acquisition of territory on the western side of India, he would at once have asserted, that the war resulting solely from those instructions, was the war of the court of directors.

Lord Melville and the secret committee were too correct to assert, that the directors had *uniformly* condemned war for extension of dominion, or that they had *uniformly* prohibited their governments in India, from interfering in the domestic or national quarrels of the native princes. But what they do say, every rational man will say also; that the orders which the directors did issue, prohibiting both the one and the other, without evident necessity, were founded no less in wisdom, than in justice and moderation. They then mention the instructions sent to Bombay, in 1768, so manifestly opposite to their general instructions. The war that followed; the approbation of that war by the directors; the dissatisfaction they expressed at the peace concluded by the Bengal government; their instructions, for reverting to the treaty concluded with with Ragoba, if a pretence was afforded for breaking the peace of Porrunder; and they add, "that the court of directors in this instance, gave *countenance* and *sanction* to the very measures they had themselves so pointedly condemned, and are therefore so far chargeable *with the responsibility* of it." The resolution is perfectly just, as far as it goes, but it does not

go far enough: for the *sole responsibility*, by the very reasoning in the resolution, must rest on the court of directors.

"The annals of Mr. Hastings's administration, (you say) exhibit, *an almost uninterrupted series*, of unjustifiable and ruinous wars."

An assertion so contrary to the fact is highly discreditable to the Edinburgh Review.

Mr. Hastings was thirteen years at the head of the administration in Bengal; for more than *one half* of that period, there was peace in India. At no period of his administration did Bengal feel the calamities of war, and after the conquest of Rohilcund in the year 1774, no external enemy disturbed the peace of the dominions of our Ally, the nabob of Oude.

You admit that Mysore was the aggressor in the war, and you must, of necessity admit also, that France was the aggressor in the war.

It follows, therefore, that the only war in India during his administration, which was both *unjustifiable and ruinous*, was the Maratta war; for admitting, if you choose it, that the Rohilla war of six months, in the year 1774, and the insurrection of Benares, in 1781, were caused by the unjustifiable proceedings of Mr. Hastings, you cannot call them *ruinous wars*. By the first 700,000l. was brought into the public treasury. By the second, an additional annual revenue

of 140,000l. was procured, for which credit has been taken from the year 1781, to this day. The sum actually received by the company, in consequence of these acts, if it is to them you allude, is more than five millions sterling, nett profit.

The Maratta war was ruinous, like the Mysore, and the French war, in so far as this, that it involved India in considerable expences. But the court of directors never have admitted that the Maratta war was *unjustifiable*, nor have they ever been so unjust as to impute it to the irregular ambition of their own servants.

It is perfectly true, that for more than the last twenty years the court of directors have adopted a different policy from their predecessors, and as I think, a wiser policy. They conceive that there is a certain point, beyond which, without evident necessity, it would be imprudent to advance; in other words they have adopted the policy professed by Lord Melville in the year 1782, in opposition to the policy of a former court of directors; they have very strongly condemned the Maratta war of Marquis Wellesley; Lord Melville ceased to be the India minister, before the war broke out, but his successors have as warmly approved of the policy of the war, as the directors have condemned it.

The origin of the two Maratta wars, is precisely

the same: both were caused by an interference in the national quarrels of the Maratta princes. Ragoba fled to Bombay in 1775; the Peshwa fled to Bassein, in 1802; both were protected by the English, and war was the consequence at each period.

Of the first war, the court of directors approved, and Lord Melville condemned it; of the second war, the court of directors have disapproved; the successors of Lord Melville have given it the sanction of their approbation.

The difference is simply this: the act of parliament positively prohibits any interference in the domestic or national quarrels of the native princes, without evident necessity. The directors not perceiving the evident necessity of interfering in behalf of the Peshwa, have condemned the Maratta war as highly impolitic, and as a violation of the law. The king's India ministers, on the other hand, viewing the present state of India, conceived the necessity of the interference to be evident, and consequently approved the war, as founded on justice, and sound policy.

The responsibility for the future good government of India, was taken away altogether from the court of directors, and transferred to ministers appointed by the crown, by the act of 1784. That the deterioration of the company's affairs since that period is ably and accurately stated by Lord Lauderdale, is beyond all doubt.

The only difference of opinion that can exist is, as to the causes which have produced so melancholy a reverse in the prosperity of the company since the year 1784. Lord Lauderdale imputes the reverse to a wanton departure from that policy, so wisely enjoined by the legislature. Wars carried on in India for the purpose of augmenting our territories, are, in his lordship's opinion, the principal cause of the debt of India, although he does allude to the very great increase of our establishments since 1784.

He says, that coupling the words of a resolution moved by Lord Melville, in the House of Commons, in the year 1782, and the clause in the act of 1784, with the speeches delivered at the time by many eminent men, the principle laid down was this, that under no possible circumstances that might hereafter occur in India, would it be wise policy to extend our territorial possessions. His lordship quotes the opinion delivered by Mr. Fox, in 1804, and I am very ready to admit, that such was the sense in which both the resolution, and the clause, were generally understood in the years 1782 and 1784.

So understanding them, Lord Thurlow observed in the House of Lords, that the resolution contained an absurd, metaphysical proposition, utterly inapplicable to any act done by Mr. Hastings, to whose conduct it was meant to apply; it was highly ridiculous to

vote a principle, which necessity might compel us to depart from in a few years, as the means of preserving the empire we then possessed. If the resolution meant nothing more than this, that a state of peace was preferable to a state of war, and that it would be criminal to commence hostilities against a native prince in India, without a justifiable cause, for the purpose of enlarging our own dominions, the resolution contained a truism, which it did not appear to him to be necessary to enter on the journals. But with the explanation of its meaning which as he understood had been given in another place, it became an absurd metaphysical proposition.

The justice of Lord Thurlow's observations, and the folly of the resolution, taken in the sense applied to it, by Lord Lauderdale and Mr. Fox, will appear by what followed.

The aggression of Tippoo Sultaun, compelled Lord Cornwallis to attack him. He granted peace to Tippoo when he was in his power, on the condition of his giving up half his territories, and half his treasures. On the principle of the resolution, Lord Cornwallis, if he reserved the treasure to pay the expences of the war, was not justified in securing any part of the territories for the company. Yet, although both Lord Lauderdale and Mr. Fox were in parliament, when the thanks of both houses were voted to Lord Cornwallis,

we did not hear that the resolution was so understood. The vote of thanks passed in each house without a dissenting voice; his majesty raised Earl Cornwallis to the rank of marquis, and the company gave him 5000l. a year for twenty years.

In the second Mysore war, Tippoo Sultaun lost his life, and his family was ruined. Lord Wellesley placed the Raja of Mysore on the throne of his ancestors, but he took for the company all the conquests made by Tippoo, and his father. By this arrangement a long line of sea coast was secured, which afforded us, as it included in it the port of Mangalore, an additional defence against the future projects of France. Both houses, the king's India ministers, and the company approved the arrangement of Lord Wellesley; he received honours from the king, and 100,000l. from the company.

But if it was the true policy, never under any possible circumstances to increase our territories, the whole country ought to have been given to the son of Tippoo, or divided between him, and the Raja of Mysore.

It is not contended by Lord Lauderdale, that the act of parliament was violated, because the words, "without evident necessity," left no other onus on those noble lords, than that of proving the aggression of Tippoo Sultaun, and the policy after that aggres-

sion of enlarging the company's territories; but I fully agree with Lord Lauderdale that the opinions of eminent men in parliament, in the years 1782, and 1783, are very correctly stated by his lordship.

We are surely not bound by opinions delivered even by the most eminent men, if their opinions do not apply to all possible cases.

The common sense mode of treating the subject is, to consider, whether at the close of two wars, in both of which Tippoo Sultaun was the acknowledged aggressor, it would have been better policy to have followed the line adopted by Lord Clive in the year 1765, when he replaced Sujah Dowlah on the Musnud of Oude, than to have made a partition of one half of Tippoo's dominions, at the close of the first war, and to have taken for the company a still greater extent of territory, at the successful close of the second war.

But Lord Lauderdale, I believe, will find that no considerable addition was made to the debt by those two wars; Marquis Cornwallis received a large sum for the company at the end of the first war, which nearly defrayed the extraordinary expences of that war. The second war was of very short duration, and the extraordinary expences could not have been very considerable.

As far, therefore, as applies to these two wars, the

proposition of Lord Lauderdale cannot be supported. They were not wars undertaken for the purpose of extending our empire. They were wars of necessity not of choice, nor was the acquisition of territory the motive of our engaging in those wars, though the successful issue of the wars was attended by an acquisition of territory, with very little addition to the debt of India. The territory acquired much more than pays the expence of the forces raised to defend it: these were the only two wars with a native power, in which we were engaged during the administration of Lord Melville. He resigned in 1801.

But the Maratta war of Lord Wellesley, of which the successors of Lord Melville have so warmly approved, is of a very different nature indeed from the two Mysore wars, and its policy is very questionable. It was a war of choice, not of necessity. If justifiable in its origin, we were not under a necessity of signing the treaty of Bassein, which very naturally produced the war. It would be idle to contend, therefore, that the spirit of the act of 1784, was not violated, by engaging the company in this Maratta war. On this occasion for the first time, a disagreement in political sentiments broke out between the king's India ministers, and the court of directors; the former highly approved of the treaty of Bassein, the cause of the war, the latter were very nearly unanimous in condemning

that treaty. This war added to the debt of the company, at a time when that debt amounted to twenty-two millions, and when in consequence of the war in Europe, the company experienced considerable embarrassments at home. But it certainly did not increase the debt to the extent supposed by Lord Lauderdale.

The result of this war, independent of the increased debt, has been to extend our territories beyond the imperial cities of Dehly and Agra, and to acquire the province of Cuttack, which, though of little value in point of revenue, is of great political importance, as it connects our possessions in Bengal, and the Carnatic, and leaves us at all times a free communication between Bengal and Madras, by land.

That no pecuniary advantage has resulted, or ever can result from the immense enlargement of our dominion, by conquests from the Marattas, or by our subsidiary treaties is certain; what is received with one hand, is paid away with the other. We have in one sense increased our means of defence, because, by the subsidiary treaties, we are enabled to keep up an additional military force; but we have a much greater extent of country to defend. The treaties in all instances were not perfectly satisfactory to the parties who signed them, and the question is, whether in the event of a French invasion, the native powers may not be

induced to act against us. It is only in the event of a French invasion, that British India could have been in any danger, from the year 1784, to this day, or that it can ever be in danger hereafter.

It is an old standing order of the directors to all their governments, to keep a watchful eye upon the French at all times, in peace as well as in war.

In replying to the comments of the directors, on his political measures, Lord Wellesley says, "in considering all questions of Indian policy, it is necessary to extend our views beyond those powers immediately possessing territory in India. It is well known that the French have never ceased to look upon the reestablishment of their power in India."

"It is necessary to recollect that French power and influence are important parts of every political discussion in the governments abroad; that French influence was powerful in India, and that to have omitted to guard against the French, would have been equally injurious to the interests of the company, and of the nation."

The court of directors I am sure, are the last men in the world who will deny the justice of these observations. The question on which they have differed with the king's India ministers is, as to the effect of Lord Wellesley's measures as they apply to the

attempts which they believe France will hereafter make, to reestablish her power in India. The directors saw the evident necessity of the two Mysore wars, and they warmly approved of both; but they did not see the evident necessity of Lord Wellesley's Maratta war, and they disapproved of it, having fully in their view at the same time, the necessity of guarding against the French. Men best acquainted with India, have differed exceedingly, as to the policy of this Maratta war, laying entirely aside the addition which it has made to the debt.

I think I shall be able to prove to the satisfaction of Lord Lauderdale, that he is totally mistaken in imputing the present debt of India to wars carried on with the native powers, for the purpose of augmenting our empire, or that even any very considerable part of the debt has been created by those wars.

It must appear obvious to Lord Lauderdale, that the debt existing in India in 1784, when Lord Melville became the minister, must have been paid off in a very few years, from the surplus revenues of Bengal, provided ministers, on the restoration of general peace in India, and in Europe, had thought proper to reduce our civil and military establishments to the standard of January, 1778, prior to the commencement of the war. Mr. Hastings began the reduction before he left Bengal in 1785, and it was carried on by his suc-

cessor, Sir John Macpherson, to the extent of saving a million sterling a year, in the expenditure of Bengal.

The war had not diminished our military character; there was no reason at the time to fear any attack from Tippoo Sultaun or the Marattas, and Lord Melville before he came into office had complained of the heavy expences incurred in India, and pointed out the necessity of accurately revising our civil and military establishments, for the purpose of making every practicable reduction.

In the year 1785, his arrangement was settled, but upon a scale very far exceeding the peace establishment of January, 1778.

The salaries heretofore given to the company's civil servants, were so very small, that it was impossible, with the most rigid œconomy, to subsist upon them. It was the principle of Lord Melville to interdict those emoluments, which it was well known the company's civil servants had hitherto enjoyed, and therefore it became necessary to give such liberal salaries, that with proper œconomy the civil servants might save competent fortunes, in the course of years. The principle was a most excellent one, but when carried into practice, the natural effect was, to add very considerably to the civil charges. The subsequent arrangements of Lord Cornwallis, which were approved by Lord

Melville, made another very considerable addition to the amount of the civil expenditure.

The army was fixed on a much larger establishment than the peace establishment of 1778, but particularly at Madras and Bombay. The plan was sent to Mr. Hastings by the court of directors, who required his opinion upon it. He objected to the increase at Madras and Bombay, as the inevitable consequence must be, a very heavy drain upon Bengal, since the revenues of Bombay were trifling, and the revenues of Madras, insufficient to defray the charge of the proposed establishment. He observed, that the first success of Hyder in the late war, was not caused by any want of a force, fully sufficient for the defence of the Carnatic, but from the dispersed state of that force, and the error of not keeping the Carnatic army properly equipped for field service, at the shortest notice. Lord Melville, however, persisted in his plan, declaring that the Carnatic and Bombay were the vulnerable parts of our empire, and that the security of both were necessary to the future safety of Bengal. It was not of the hostility of the native powers that Lord Melville was apprehensive, but he possessed information in the year 1785, which it would have been improper to communicate to the public. Mr. Fox, at a subsequent period,* stated it in the House of

* See the debate, on Buonaparte's letter to his majesty, in January, 1800.

Commons, in order to prove, that in hostility to England there was no difference between a Bourbon and a Buonaparte. "The peace of Paris was scarcely ratified in 1783, when a plan was formed by France in conjunction with Holland, to recommence hostilities in India." This was Lord Melville's real motive for increasing the armies of Madras and Bombay, so far beyond the former peace establishment.

In the year 1787, there was a fresh alarm created, not of an attack from any of the native powers, but of a new project formed by France; three very strong British regiments were raised, and sent to India.

At subsequent periods our armies were still further increased, and as so many of his majesty's regiments were become stationary in India, it was indispensably necessary entirely to new model the army of the company.

In the year 1778, we had not five thousand British troops in all India; our native battalions were commanded by captains, with one subaltern at the head of each company. But on the new model, a regiment of sepoys consisting of two battalions, had a colonel commandant, two lieutenant-colonels, two majors, eight captains, and thirty-two subalterns. We have now in India, an European force of twenty-five thousand men, sixteen regiments of native cavalry, and one hundred and thirty-six battalions of sepoys.

If so enormous an increase of the army in India has been made in order to extend the patronage of ministers, or for the purpose of enabling the governor-general to augment our territories, great indeed is their criminality.

But my opinion is, that in the years 1785 and 1787, Lord Melville increased our armies from an apprehension of the projects formed by France, in seasons of profound peace. After the war broke out in 1793, and still more after the French expedition to Egypt, the intention of attacking us in India could not be doubted.

All the calculations of 1793, have indeed proved delusive; the basis of those calculations was peace in India, and peace in Europe. It is true, they were made when we were actually at war with France; but I am sure Lord Lauderdale will recollect, that Lord Melville was one among many, who conceived in 1793, that the war would be speedily, and successfully concluded. He unhappily has been mistaken, and a war of seventeen years has had the effect of very materially diminishing the sales of the company at home, and of most enormously increasing their expences.

The effect of the war abroad has been, totally to absorb that surplus on which Lord Melville so confidently calculated in the year 1793.

Lord Lauderdale after having very truly stated the present distressed situation of the company at home

and abroad, which throughout his inquiry, he imputes to the wars with the native powers of India, adds, " recently, indeed, it has been insinuated, that it is to the European warfare, which has prevailed almost without interruption since the renewal of the charter, that those reverses may be in a great measure attributed. But this vindication cannot be seriously relied upon. The war in Europe was not an event unforeseen, which took place long after the public expectation was raised by the arrangement of the legislature. On the contrary, we were engaged in hostilities at the time."

" But it is in truth, ridiculous to assign the warfare in Europe as the cause of the great losses the company have experienced. By it they have in reality *been subjected to little additional expence*," &c. &c.

As an *argumentum ad homines*, the remark is just, for notwithstanding the war, both Lord Melville and Lord Castlereagh continued, while the debt of India was rapidly increasing, and the distresses at home accumulating, to represent the affairs of the company as in a most flourishing state. But the good sense and the sagacity of Lord Lauderdale will enable him to discover on an examination of the items in the company's accounts, that it is really to the war in Europe that he must impute a principal part of the India debt.

Lord Melville may have erred in fixing the military so high in the year 1785, in adding to the establishments in 1787, and in the prodigious increase of the military establishments, since the warfare in Europe. But the apprehensions of the designs of the old government of France in peace, and the still stronger apprehensions which he felt of the designs of France, after the warfare in Europe, were the assigned causes of the increase of our military establishments.

It is admitted, that in the year 1793, there was an available surplus in India, of one million six hundred thousand pounds, and a debt of seven millions only.

Lord Cornwallis was succeeded in that year by Lord Teignmouth, a man, who as governor-general was rigidly œconomical. In his administration of five years, we had no war with a native power; yet between 1793 and 1798, when Lord Wellesley arrived in India, the debt had been increased from seven, to eleven millions. The cause of the increase is palpable; the surplus on which Lord Melville so confidently reckoned in 1793, had totally disappeared in 1798, owing to an addition made to the establishments, equal in amount to the surplus revenue of 1793. Expeditions were fitted out to Ceylon, the eastern islands possessed by the Dutch, and to Manilla, and Mauritius. The expence of these ex-

peditions, and the money advanced each year for the investment, compelled Lord Teignmouth, notwithstanding all his œconomy, to add four millions to the debt of India. This increase of debt, and the total absorption of Lord Melville's boasted surplus, can only be placed to the warfare in Europe. It is true, as Lord Lauderdale observes, that the company has been repaid in England, a considerable sum in satisfaction of the money they advanced for national objects in India. But still the increase of the debt of India, as far as four millions, is to be placed to the account of the warfare in Europe. A further increase of that debt, to the amount, I believe, of two millions, was caused by the expedition from India to Egypt, in the year 1801; the surplus had totally disappeared in 1798, owing to increased establishments; and as the debt increased, there was annually a deficit, and the investment was purchased by borrowed money.

I am not the advocate either of Lord Melville, or of Marquis Wellesley, but the justice which I demand on the part of Mr. Hastings, I should be ashamed to withhold from them.

On a full examination of the company's accounts, Lord Lauderdale will discover, that it is really to the warfare in Europe, not to war with the native powers for the extension of our empire, that by far the greater part of the debt created since 1793, is to be attributed.

If the warfare in Europe had not created the necessity of increasing our establishments in India, since 1793, the surplus of one million six hundred thousand pounds would have remained to this day.

No man can be so infatuated as to deny the justice of Lord Lauderdale's reasoning. Peace in India, as well as peace at home, is most desirable, and a war entered into in India, for the purpose of augmenting our empire, would be impolitic in the highest degree.

The debt has undoubtedly been increased by Lord Wellesley's Maratta war. I only differ from Lord Lauderdale, as to the extent of the increase by that war.

You say that neither an individual nor a nation can fairly be said to be ruined, whose debts do not amount to thrice their annual income.

Certainly an individual having a debt of thirty-two thousand pounds, on an estate of fifteen thousand pounds a year, is not ruined. By reducing his annual expences to five thousand pounds, he will be clear of debt in less than four years.

But the company is in a very different situation. The charter by which she holds India, expires in a very few years; to her, therefore, a debt of thirty-two millions abroad, and without assets at home to pay the money advanced by the proprietors, would be

absolute ruin, if the justice of the legislature did not consider that she has not been the author of the ruin: That the government of India, and the responsibility for its good government, has been for nearly twenty-six years, in the hands of ministers appointed by the crown, under an act of the legislature.

It would be idle to compare the present state of the company, with an annual revenue of fifteen millions, with its state in 1777, when its revenues were not seven millions, but when its expences were so low as to leave a surplus of two millions, and when there was no public debt.

It would be idle to compare it with the state in 1785, after a war of five years, when India was indebted seven millions, and when there would have been a surplus of two millions, if the company could have reduced their establishments to the standard of January 1798. But in 1785, they had only the power to remonstrate, not to determine.

It would be idle to compare the state of India now with its state in 1793, when on a revenue of eight millions, there was an actual surplus of one million six hundred thousand pounds, and a debt of only seven millions.

A war of seventeen years in Europe has, infinitely more than wars with the native powers in India in that period, so enormously increased the debt of India;

of the fact I am thoroughly convinced, from watching the gradual progress of the debt since 1793; and I am sure Lord Lauderdale will become a convert to my opinion.

But the debt was to a certain degree increased, by the second war with Tippoo, and still more by the protracted warfare with the Marattas.—The accounts of the company are so correctly kept, that a man of Lord Lauderdale's acuteness will be able to discover to a single rupee, how much the Mysore and Maratta wars, have added to the debt of India.

To say that the warfare in Europe has in reality subjected the company to very little additional expence, is certainly erroneous; but it would be very different, if Lord Lauderdale had said, that the warfare in Europe ought not to have subjected the company to additional expence, beyond a mere trifling sum. The justice of the observation would depend on this, whether in consequence of the warfare in Europe, a necessity did, or did not exist, of adding one million, three hundred thousand pounds to the fixed annual expences of the company, in India, between the years 1793 and 1798. To claim merit for having increased the revenues of India from eight to sixteen millions, would be absurd, if the increase of expence exceeds the increase of revenue.

Mr. Hastings had an undoubted right to claim merit for having increased the revenues of Bengal, because that increase was not attended by any increase of establishments. Marquis Wellesley has a right to claim merit also in every instance where an increase of revenue has not been attended by an equal increase of expence.

Supposing we neither gained nor lost by the subsidiary treaties of Lord Wellesley, or by the ceded and conquered districts, still a very serious evil attends the great augmentation of our empire. The necessity which the king's India ministers suppose does exist, of keeping up a standing force of twenty-five thousand Europeans; this causes a most inconvenient drain to the population of Great Britain and Ireland. Had we nothing to apprehend from France, an European force of twelve thousand men would be amply sufficient, even extended as our empire now is.

There are certain very important questions, which must be determined, before we are entitled to condemn the conduct of Lord Melville, his successor Lord Castlereagh, or Marquis Wellesley.

Have the two ministers subjected the company to heavy and unnecessary expences, by increasing establishments since the year 1793? Were not the old establishments fully sufficient to defend India against the project avowedly formed by France, for marching an army into Indostan?

Did Lord Wellesley, by assuming the government of the Carnatic and Tanjore, by commuting payments in money, for grants of territory from the nabob vizeir of Oude, the Nizam of the Decan, and the Peshwa of the Maratta states, and also by the Maratta war, adopt the measures best calculated to resist the expected invasion of Indostan by a French army?

Will it be said that there were no grounds for the expected invasion of Indostan? That the dread expressed, was a mere pretence used by Lord Melville and Lord Castlereagh, and that their real object was to extend the patronage of ministers, by increasing the army in India?

Will it be said that Lord Wellesley entertained no serious fears of a French invasion, though he used it as a pretence for carrying his favourite measure into effect, which was, the augmentation of the British empire in India, by conquest, and by subsidiary treaties?

I perfectly concur in opinion with you that Buonaparte greatly overrates the value of India to Great Britain, situated as India now is. As long as we sent no bullion to India, and made the annual investments by employing a surplus revenue, India was a very valuable possession. Since the war commenced in Europe in 1793, India has not been a valuable possession. But is it probable that Buonaparte will think

so, or that he is insensible of the value which India would be of to France? You are aware of the difficulties he would have to encounter, and the heavy expences he would have to incur, were he to carry his project into execution; yet you think he may succeed in bringing a French army to the banks of the Attock. Ministers I believe think so too, and hence the necessity arises of being in great force, to repel an attack, which after all he may never make.

Under these circumstances a surplus can hardly be expected to the amount of half a million a year; because independent of all our expences we have the interest of a debt of thirty-two millions, at eight per cent, to discharge. A larger surplus certainly cannot be expected, as long as the warfare in Europe continues, provided our apprehensions of the projects of France compel us to keep up an army of one hundred and seventy thousand men, and while we have so extended an empire to defend.

Under the management of the court of directors, I do not believe that a debt equal to the present amount of it, could have been contracted. The assertion that the directors could not check the irregular ambition of their own servants is the repetition of an assertion made in 1782, repeated in 1783 and 1784, when a succession of ministers were resolved totally to change the constitution of the company. The

court of directors at all times contained in their number, gentlemen as well informed, and as capable of directing the affairs of India, as either Lord Melville or Lord Castlereagh. This I state, without meaning to disparage the talents of either of those noble lords. The directors possessed full power to check the irregular ambition of their own servants; but what was the irregular ambition alluded to? Did they complain that Mr. Hastings had involved them in a Maratta war? On the contrary, they disapproved of his interference to put an end to the Maratta war, and they instructed him to seize the first favourable moment afforded by the conduct of the ministers at Poona, for renewing the engagements with Ragoba, which they well knew must renew the war. Did they accuse him as the author of the war in the Carnatic? On the contrary, they expressed in the strongest language, their sense of his zeal and activity, in the prompt relief which he afforded to the Carnatic. Did they deem him an irregular or an ambitious servant? On the contrary, they transmitted him their thanks for his services during the war, and on his arrival in England, they unanimously thanked him for his long, faithful, and able services. Had they no power to inflict punishment where they thought it was due? They dismissed the governor of Madras, and the Commander in Chief of the army; they dismissed the

Commander in Chief of the Bombay forces, and the senior member of administration, Mr. Carnac. The plea of taking from the directors, the management of the company's affairs, because they could not check the irregular ambition of their own servants, was a very unfounded plea.

Under the present constitution of the company, indeed, the directors have not the power to express to their governor-general, even *their opinion* of his irregular ambition; for in that light, whether the opinion was right or wrong, they viewed various of the political acts of Marquis Wellesley. Had it been the object of government to support the old constitution of the company, there would have been no necessity for passing the act of 1784. They might have changed the part of its constitution, of which both ministers and opposition so loudly, but so unjustly complained—I mean the power of the court of proprietors, to consider the propriety of any act done by the court of directors, and the liberty of recommending it to them, to reconsider their own act. This power was exercised by the proprietors in the case of Mr. Hastings, in the year 1782. The House of Commons voted that it was the duty of the court of directors to remove Mr. Hastings from the government of Bengal. This mandate was immediately obeyed by the majority of that court, and the minority were warned of the danger they in-

curred, by resisting the will of the House of Commons. But at the recommendation of the court of proprietors, the directors rescinded their resolution for the recal of Mr. Hastings. In this instance, at least, the interference of the proprietors was most beneficial, for no new governor-general could have done more than Mr. Hastings did between May 1782, and February 1785, when he voluntarily resigned. The chances certainly are, that a new man sent from England by the Rockingham administration, would have lost India altogether.

But if upon general principles, it was thought proper to deprive the proprietors of the power of considering the propriety of any act done by the court of directors, and approved by his majesty's ministers, the constitution of the company might have been changed in that particular point; nor did it create the necessity of placing the whole power and responsibility for the future government of India, either in the hands of ministers nominated by the crown, or by parliament.

As the power has been exercised since the year 1784, Lord Lauderdale conceives that the interference of the legislature was an unfortunate circumstance. I should perfectly agree with him, if the fact were proved, that subsequent to the warfare in Europe, no necessity existed, for so enormously increasing our establishments in India. If the power had remained in the hands of the

court of directors, they could not have ventured so to increase the establishments, nor would it have been necessary if the army in India had been their army, to have totally changed its constitution.

In the year 1792, it was the opinion of Lord Cornwallis, and of Lord Melville also, that the army in India was of sufficient strength to defend it against the whole world. If Lord Melville had retained that opinion, in the following years of his administration, the debt of India would have been paid off long ago, and the nation would have received half a million annually from the company. I know not why Lord Melville changed his opinion, but it is natural to presume that the change of opinion was caused by a revolution in the state of Europe since the year 1792, which has made the continent dependent on France, and has exposed British India to the possibility of invasion by the joint armies of France and Russia. Hence the necessity arose of more than doubling the European force which was kept up in 1792, and of adding very considerably to the native army, prior to the Maratta war. In fact, I believe both Lord Cornwallis and Lord Melville were perfectly correct, taking the world *as it was* in 1792, and no man at that period foresaw the wonderful change that would take place *in the world*, in the following ten years.

Whether India be worth retaiuing, if its expences,

and the interest of the debt must necessarily equal its revenues, or whether it would not have been the wiser policy even to have risqued the loss of India altogether, than to have more than doubled our military force since the year 1792, are questions, which Lord Lauderdale has not entered into.

But his lordship, throughout his review, assumes it as a fact, that wars in India, for extension of dominion, have created the embarrassments of the company abroad and at home, and that it is perfectly ridiculous to impute these embarrassments to the warfare in Europe.

On further consideration, I am sure, Lord Lauderdale will concur in opinion with me, that the second Mysore war, is solely imputable to the warfare in Europe. Buonaparte was in Egypt in the year 1798, he corresponded with Tippoo Sultaun, and that prince was induced by his promise of future support, to conclude an alliance offensive and defensive with the governor-general of the French islands.

In so far as the Maratta war of Marquis Wellesley increased the debt of India, if extension of dominion was the object of that war, the reasoning of Lord Lauderdale is conclusive. But without having the accounts before me, I may safely affirm, that the extra expences of that war did not amount to four millions; consequently the great mass of the debt of

India, is imputable to the warfare in Europe. Those who are responsible for the preservation of India, conceived it necessary to double the strength of the army, upon the same principle that so many millions have been expended here, in increasing our force of every description. Yet to this hour neither England nor British India have been invaded.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

JOHN SCOTT WARING.

Peterborough House,
Fulham, May 20th, 1810.

W. Flint, Printer, Old Bailey, London.

ERRATA.

Page 6 line 17, *for* 'if,' *read* 'of.'

6 23, *for* 'Carumnissa,' *read* 'Carumnaasa.'

12 25, *for* 'I,' *read* 'If.'

25 20, *for* 'in,' *read* 'on.'

BSB Bayerische StaatsBibliothek
MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

Scott Waring, John

Letter to the editor of the Edinburgh Review, by Major Scott Waring, in reply to the critique on Lord Lauderdale's view of the affairs of the East India Company, published in the 30th number of the Edinburgh Review

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